

### **REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

In view of the amendments and remarks herein, favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested. By this Amendment, claim 14 has been canceled. Thus, claims 1-13 and 15-22 are pending for further examination.

The drawings have been objected to as allegedly failing to show every feature of the claimed invention. Specifically, the Examiner contends that the "product registration database" recited in claims 9 and 15 is not shown in the drawings. However, Applicant respectfully points out that exemplary product registration databases are shown in Figure 2 (to the right of blocks 2 and 4, respectively). Thus, Applicant believes that the drawings fully comply with 37 CFR 1.83(a). Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection are respectfully requested.

The drawings have also been objected to based on the Examiner's contention that "partial views are depicted in figure 2." Applicant respectfully disagrees with this contention and believes that Figure 2 shows full, not partial views, of exemplary aspects of the invention. Thus, reconsideration and withdrawal of this drawing objection are also requested. Alternatively, Applicant requests a clarification of what the Examiner means by the statement that "partial views are depicted in figure 2," so that Applicant may provide a further response on this issue.

Claims 1-22 have been rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Specifically, the Examiner contends that Claim 1 is "vague because there does not appear to be a distinction between the preamble and the body of the claim." The

Examiner also contends that "it is not clear how the method is implemented." With respect to the first point raised by the Examiner, Applicant points out that the claim is written in a standard format that includes a preamble followed by the transitional phrase "the method comprising." The body of the claim then follows the transitional phrase in a conventional manner. Thus, Applicant believes that the claim includes an appropriate distinction between the preamble and the body of the claim and is not indefinite. With respect to the second point raised by the Examiner, Applicant respectfully submits that there is no requirement to limit the claimed method to a particular implementation. The recited steps clearly set forth the method intended to be covered by the claims. Thus, Applicant believes that the claims fully comply with the requirements of 35 USC 112, second paragraph. As such, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are also requested.

Claims 1-8 and 14 have been rejected under 35 USC 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. Claim 14 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. With respect to claims 1-8, Applicant points out that these claims are method claims and have no requirement to "define a machine or manufacture by identifying the physical structure of the machine or manufacture by way of hardware or software," as asserted by the Examiner. In addition, there is no requirement that a method claim be specifically limited to functions or steps performed on or by a computer," as suggested by the Examiner. While the claimed method is preferably implemented by a computer, there is no requirement to recite a computer implementation. The method is not rendered

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inoperable simply because it does not recite a computer. Thus, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

Claims 9-13 and 15 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Rogers. Applicant respectfully submits that Rogers does not teach the invention defined in any of the pending claims. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Rogers teaches an electronic product registration system that, *inter alia*, uses serial numbers to register product transactions for the purpose of reducing improper product returns. However, Rogers fails to teach, *inter alia*, the use of a serial number mask that characterizes the serial number format and includes at least a first character that describes variables of the serial number format, as required by both claims 9 and 15. The Examiner has improperly equated the serial numbers and check digits in the disclosure of Rogers with the serial number mask defined in the pending claims. There is no teaching of a serial number mask in Rogers. Thus, Rogers cannot and does not identically disclose each and every feature of the claimed invention, as required for anticipation under Section 102. Thus, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

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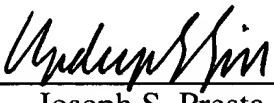

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In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant believes that the pending claims patentably distinguish the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. Thus, withdrawal of the rejections and passage of this case to issuance at an early date are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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